

# FOCUS

## Missouri

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August 5, 2005

### HEADLINE NEWS

#### General Motors Announces Major Expansion at Wentzville



Less than two months after meeting with top automotive officials in Detroit, Gov. Matt Blunt along with General Motors officials announced Tuesday a new \$30 million investment by the automaker in its Wentzville facility to upgrade two stamping presses. The Wentzville plant currently produces GM's full-size vans, known as the Chevrolet Express and the GMC Savana and employs 2,700 workers. [Read more...](#)

#### Blunt Encouraged By Job Creation, Economic Growth



Gov. Matt Blunt held a news conference on Aug. 1 to discuss the latest Economic Conditions Report, prepared by the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center. The report shows that since January, 39,700 new jobs were created while the state's unemployment rate in June fell to 5.4 percent - the lowest rate since February 2003. In addition, Missourian's real personal income grew at a faster pace than the U.S. rate in the first quarter of 2005. View full [Economic Conditions Report](#). [Read more...](#)

#### General Revenue Collections Rise in July

An increase in individual income tax collections, as well as corporate income and corporate franchise tax collections helped fuel a 2.8 percent increase in general revenue in July to \$430.5 million, compared to 2005 fiscal year-to-date collections of \$418.8 million. [Read more...](#)

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#### UPCOMING EVENTS

**August 23-25, 2005**

[2005 National NASWA LMI Directors' Conference](#)

**August 25, 2005**

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**October 12-14, 2005**

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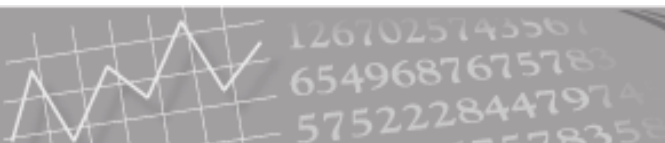
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#### ARCHIVED REPORTS

[Summer Employment Trends Cause Some Job Growth](#)

#### QUICK LINKS

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### Career Grades Report 2002-2012



Missouri's Career Grade Report assigns academic letter grades to various occupations within the state based on each occupation's economic outlook over the next decade. Grade-A designated jobs have the best outlook from 2002-2012 while Grade-F jobs have the worst outlook. Grades are based on a combination of job openings, percent growth, and the average wages of a particular occupation. [Read more...](#)

### Energy Costs and Strategies for Efficiency

The recent heat wave along with news stories about possible power shortages and rising energy costs across the country factor into concerns Missouri consumers have about energy costs in the middle of this long, hot summer. However, awareness about energy costs and strategies to make the home more energy efficient can help displace these concerns.

[Read more...](#)

### Beige Book Report on Kansas City and St. Louis Districts: Solid

The Federal Reserve Beige Book showed solid growth in all twelve districts from May through early July. The St. Louis District showed continued manufacturing and service industry expansion and increased home sales but a mixed banking/finance market. The Kansas City District reported increased consumer spending, very strong tourism, moderate manufacturing expansion, and solid real estate and construction. Soft spots: the drought, which may affect crop prices; and commercial real estate in the St. Louis District. [Read more...](#)

#### FOCUS ON COMMUNITY

#### Over \$2.5M Approved for Springfield Projects

DED approved up to \$2.55 million in Brownfield remediation tax credits to offset costs to clean up hazardous contaminants prior to the redevelopment of the former Heer's Tower building. The new mixed-use facility is expected to create nearly 300 jobs. DED also approved up to \$187,500 in Neighborhood Assistance Program tax credits for Habitat for Humanity of Springfield, Mo., Inc. to renovate a facility that will house the

#### FOCUS ON WORKFORCE

#### Missouri Employer Committee

The Missouri Employer Committee (MEC), comprised of volunteer business leaders, helps identify and provide recommendations to solve employment challenges and works to establish and maintain close relationships between state agencies and businesses in order to strengthen Missouri's complex workforce system. The MEC system is composed of a state steering committee and

#### FOCUS ON BUSINESS

#### St. Louis Welcomes U.S. Cellular

Gov. Matt Blunt joined county and company executives to celebrate U. S. Cellular's entry into St. Louis. The company has hired more than 400 people and invested nearly \$90 million to build a new cellular network in the St. Louis region, making it the company's second largest market now, behind Chicago. The company has opened 20 retail stores and 30 agent locations throughout St. Louis already, and plans to open

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**MISSOURI**  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Questions or Comments?  
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city's second ReStore. The proceeds from store sales will be used to build two additional Habitat houses per year. [Read more...](#)

### **AmerenCDC Accepting Grant Applications**

Ameren Community Development Corporation is now accepting grant applications for the second cycle of 2005 grants. The AmerenCDC funds projects that promote economic development and job growth in AmerenUE's electric service territory in Missouri. There will be \$1.35 million available for eligible projects through the grant cycle that began August 1. [Read more...](#)

### **State Tax Credits Help Downtown St. Louis Rehab**

Up to \$1.5 million in Brownfield Redevelopment Program remediation tax credits were approved to help in the cleanup of hazardous contaminants at the former Cheerful House on Washington Ave. The building will be renovated and rehabilitated into a restaurant, business center, parking spaces, residential and commercial office space and will eventually create at least 56 new jobs. [Read more...](#)

about 30 local committees who help evaluate services, provide guidance, and sponsor educational seminars to increase program awareness and help businesses stay current on important workforce topics. Join an MEC by contacting your local Career Center or call Bettye Funderburke at (573) 526-8223.

### **Open House at Jefferson City Career Center**

The Missouri Career Center in Jefferson City, 1716 Four Seasons Drive, will hold its first open house event from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday, August 12. Everyone is invited to attend and learn more about the programs and services available to job seekers and businesses.

### **Command Spanish**

Due to an increasing population of Spanish speaking individuals, workforce system employees and businesses have developed Command Spanish - short, two to three hour courses that will equip workforce staff with the basic skills necessary to bridge communications gaps and effectively meet the needs of Spanish-speaking customers. West Central Region staff is scheduled to begin Command Spanish in September, with additional training planned later throughout the state.

two additional stores and four agent locations before the year ends. [Read more...](#)

### **Two Companies Expand in Louisiana, Mo.**

The Missouri Department of Economic Development has approved a state grant that will help fund construction of water, sewer and road services in the undeveloped industrial park in Louisiana, Mo. Two local companies, LTC Pharmacy Services and Premier Builders of Louisiana LLC, will create a total of 22 new jobs as they expand their operations and become the industrial park's first tenants. [Read more...](#)

### **Springfield-Branson Regional Airport Continues to Expand**

Last week, Orlando, Fla. became the 11th city served from the Springfield-Branson Regional Airport. Allegiant Air will provide nonstop jet service to Orlando twice weekly beginning Oct. 5. In the first half of 2005, passenger numbers have increased 25.1% over the first half of 2004. Continuing at this pace, the airport will likely see 900,000 to one million passengers by the end of this year. [Read more...](#)

### House Approves CAFTA Agreement



The House narrowly approved the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) last week in a 217-215 vote, removing trade barriers and opening a market of over 44 million consumers to American products. The agreement will add six Latin American countries to the growing list of nations

with free trade agreements with the U.S. [Read more...](#)

### Massachusetts House Unveils \$296.5M Stimulus Package

The Massachusetts House unveiled a \$296.5 million economic stimulus package last week, calling for investing in small businesses, community development and work force education, while reducing regulatory burdens. The plan will be paid for by a \$200 million infrastructure improvement bond issue and general revenues. [Read](#)

[more...](#)

### Texas Law Allows Retail Tax Breaks

Texas legislators have created a law that allows Texas cities to offer retailers sales tax breaks in special investment zones effective Sept. 1. The legislature also granted \$183.5 million to the Texas Enterprise Fund and \$200 million for the Texas Emerging Technology Fund, both stimulated by Toyota's location to San Antonio.

[Read more...](#)



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## Missouri

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August 12, 2005

### HEADLINE NEWS

#### Missouri to Gain \$1.3 Billion in New Federal Highway Funds



U.S. Senator Christopher "Kit" Bond hailed the long-awaited passage of the \$286.5 billion federal highway bill and stressed that it will provide almost \$1.3 billion in additional highway funding for Missouri over the next five years. "The new transportation bill is about all these things: improving road

conditions so that drivers and their passengers are safer, reducing congestion so that people can spend less time commuting to work and more time with family or doing what they want to do, improving roads to attract new businesses, and creating new construction jobs," said Bond. [Read more...](#)

#### Missouri Ranks Well in *Business Facilities* Report

### Business Facilities

Missouri is well positioned as a prime location for business expansions or relocations, according to the first-ever *Business Facilities* Rankings Report.

The Show Me State was among the best locations for automotive influence (No. 6), biotechnology growth (No. 20) and business tax climates (No. 11). Kansas City was ranked 5th for U.S. cities having a high proportion of high school graduates and St. Louis was ranked 13th among the 20 hot headquarters metros for the 21st century.

[Read more...](#)

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#### UPCOMING EVENTS

**August 16-17, 2005**

[State of Missouri Planning Meetings for the Delta Region](#)

**August 23-25, 2005**

[2005 National NASWA LMI Directors' Conference](#)

**August 25, 2005**

[2nd Annual Missouri Economic Development Summit](#)

**October 12-14, 2005**

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#### ARCHIVED REPORTS

[Blunt Announces State Tax Credits for Two Community Development](#)

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## Number of Women-Owned Businesses Growing



There were 120,457 women-owned firms in Missouri in 2002, up from 103,626 in 1997, according to recently released data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2002 Survey of Business Owners. This was a 16.2 percent increase in the number of women-owned firms in the state. These firms accounted for more than \$19 billion in sales and receipts in 2002. [Read more...](#)

## Housing Boom in Missouri

The number of housing units in Missouri increased by 1.2 percent from 2003 to 2004, totaling over 2.5 million units. By county in Missouri, St. Louis County had the largest share of the state's housing units in 2004 with 430,624, or 16.8 percent. From 2003 to 2004, the most rapid rate of housing growth in Missouri was in Christian County, with an increase of 4.1 percent. [Read more...](#)



## [Projects in Springfield](#)

## [Summer Employment Trends Cause Some Job Growth](#)

## [Blunt Announces Brownfield Tax Credits for Further Redevelopment Along Washington Ave.](#)

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## [Missouri General Assembly](#)

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## FOCUS ON COMMUNITY

### Tax Credits Help Fund Substance Abuse Center

ReDiscover, a non-profit community mental health and substance abuse center, was approved for up to \$167,500 in Neighborhood Assistance tax credits. The tax credits are expected to leverage \$335,000 in donations. The center will use the donations to help construct a new facility at Linwood and Michigan, which will house all of its substance abuse counseling programs. [Read more...](#)

### Jon Bon Jovi Kicks Off National Volunteer Conference

Jon Bon Jovi kicked off the 2005 National Conference on Volunteering and Service in Washington by declaring that "volunteering is hip." Co-sponsored by the Corporation for National

## FOCUS ON WORKFORCE

### Open for Business... Preparing a Competitive Workforce

"Open for Business. Preparing a Competitive Workforce" is the theme for the 2005 Governor's Conference on Workforce Development set for Oct. 12-14 at Lake Ozark's Tan-Tar-A Resort. Over 800 workforce professionals are expected to attend this year's event. If you're interested in attending, exhibiting or sponsoring at the conference, please visit the website at [DWD conference information.](#)

### Mindleaders Computer Based Training

As one of the largest self-paced online learning vendors, Mindleaders provides cost effective desktop computing, business skills, technology, and professional training

## FOCUS ON BUSINESS

### Missouri and Arkansas Form Bistate Partnership

Counties in northwest Arkansas and southwest Missouri have formed the first ever bistate partnership through the Arkansas Community of Excellence (ACE) program. The ACE program, which includes Benton County, Ark. and McDonald and Barry Counties in Missouri, addresses both economic development and community development to help communities focus on economic growth. [Read more...](#)

### Mexico's Advanced Technology Center Expansion Underway

The addition to Mexico's Advanced Technology Center is well on its way to opening in January. According to Randy Etter, executive director of the ATC, the expansion will

and Community Service and the Points of Light Foundation and Volunteer Center National Network, the annual conference is the largest gathering of leaders in the national service and volunteer networks. To learn more about volunteering in Missouri, go to [www.movolunteers.org](http://www.movolunteers.org) or call 1-877-210-7611. [Read more...](#)

### Highlandville Gets State Grant for Sewer Expansion

DED awarded a \$500,000 wastewater Community Development Block Grant to the city of Highlandville in Christian County. The grant will help fund expansion of the city's public sewer system to outlying areas currently served by on-site septic systems. The project has also received federal funding through USDA Rural Development. [Read more...](#)

courses. DWD staff statewide will soon have access to more than 350 training modules online. This training option will be made available to DWD staff this month, providing them an opportunity to increase their knowledge and gain new skills at their own pace, while reducing time away from the office.

### DWD Training, Internet Information and Resources

Workforce Investment Board and partner staff will soon have access to information on the Internet. Currently information is only available through the DWD Intranet. Training calendars, registration forms, and resources will be made available online to keep workforce system staff better informed, increase accessibility, and provide ease of use.

allow the center to add more classes and expand several of its technology-oriented programs. "If we're in line with the state of Missouri's plan for economic development, that can only enhance our economic development here in the Mexico area as well," Etter said. [Read more...](#)

### Farmington Manufacturer Exporting to Japan

PP Farmington Little Tikes Commercial Inc. recently exported 210 blue hippo sculptures to Nakamura Manufacturing Corp. in Japan for a kindergarten program. The sculpture has the anatomy of a real hippo molded into its tongue where children can climb through and see how the hippo digests its food. The parent company also has Missouri facilities in Monett and Advance. [Read more...](#)



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## GLOBAL NEWS

### Nebraska Improves Tax Climate with New Incentive



Gov. Dave Heineman recently signed into law the Nebraska Advantage Package. "The new package improves Nebraska's tax climate, includes more rural tiers, more thresholds to expand participation, new eligible industries and additional funding, such as job training, which was increased to \$15 million for two years," said Richard J. Baier, director of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. [Read more...](#)

### Iowa Gains Multiple Tax Credits with New Legislation

Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack recently enacted legislation creating various tax credits to stimulate economic growth in the state. New programs include the Economic Development Region Revolving Fund Credit, Historic Preservation and Cultural and Entertainment District Credit, Endow Iowa and Economic Development Tax Incentives. [Read more...](#)



## Illinois Boosts International Economic Development



Gov. Roger Blagojevich signed legislation last week to create the Illinois Global Partnership, a non-profit corporation that will work to spur international economic development and create more jobs in the state. Illinois ranks seventh in the nation in total exports and is the sixth most visited U.S. state for overseas travelers. [Read more...](#)



# FOCUS

## Missouri

Show Me eInformation

August 19, 2005

### HEADLINE NEWS

#### DED to Undergo Major Internal Reorganization



In keeping with Gov. Matt Blunt's pledge to create quality jobs and improve Missouri's entrepreneurial climate, the Department of Economic Development has announced a major internal reorganization that builds on the current strengths of the department and incorporates a proven private sector approach to doing business.

Under the reorganization, the divisions of Business Development and Trade and Community Development will be merged into one operation to create efficiencies in how the department delivers its services to Missouri's businesses, communities and related organizations. Newly structured teams will focus on sales, marketing, development finance, financial management and compliance. The merger will also move more professionals out of Jefferson City and into the field to better serve communities and businesses; focus staff on the goals and missions of the department; and raise the department's expectations for results. [Read more...](#)

#### Milken Institute Study Shows Missouri a Bargain for Business



The cost of doing business in Missouri is about 13 percent below the national average, making the state one of the most inexpensive places to do business in the country and giving it an advantage in attracting new jobs and industries to the state, according to a study conducted by the [Milken Institute](#). [Read more...](#)

#### Missouri Businesses Continue Adding to Payrolls in July



Missouri employment continued to increase in July and the state's unemployment rate was relatively unchanged from the previous month. Non-farm payroll employment increased by 2,800 jobs on a seasonally adjusted basis. Missouri's unemployment rate edged down a tenth of a point to 5.6 percent on a not-seasonally-adjusted basis. This was less than the seasonally expected decrease for July, causing the seasonally adjusted rate to climb two-tenths of a point to 5.6 percent, the same as it had been in April and May. [Read more...](#)

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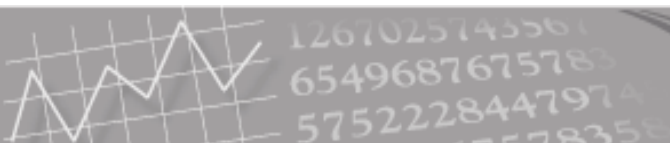
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#### ARCHIVED REPORTS

[Blunt Says Tax Credits Will Help Fund Substance Abuse Counseling Facility in Kansas City](#)

[Blunt Announces State](#)



### Missouri's Top Employing Occupations



The state's Top 30 employing occupations account for nearly 1.1 million jobs (1,091,780) or 41 percent of all jobs in the state. Retail salespersons, office clerks, cashiers, food service workers and registered nurses represent the five largest occupations in Missouri based upon the number employed. Combined, the Top 30 pay an average hourly wage of \$13.13 or \$28,997 annually. [Read more...](#)

### Economic Share: Missouri Counties' Contribution to the State's Economy

Economic Share is the percentage of the state's economy that is accounted for by an individual county. Missouri's metropolitan areas account for a large part of the state's economy, with St. Louis County and Jackson County together tallying nearly one-third of the total. [Read more...](#)

#### FOCUS ON COMMUNITY

#### New Wastewater Treatment Plant in Odessa

DED awarded a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant to Odessa to help construct a new wastewater treatment plant. The current public sewer system is not adequate to serve recent growth in the city's population. The grant will help the city construct a new treatment plant, convert an existing lagoon to a peak flow retention basin and install an aerobic digestion system with vacuum assisted drying beds. [Read more...](#)

#### Tax Credits for Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Kansas City

DED approved up to \$205,255 in tax credits through the Neighborhood Assistance Program,

#### FOCUS ON WORKFORCE

#### Briggs & Stratton Receives Training Funds

The Briggs & Stratton plant in Poplar Bluff has received a \$21,200 Employed Worker Training (EWT) Program grant from the South Central Workforce Investment Board based in West Plains. The company is the first to receive EWT funding. The program, targeted toward small struggling businesses, covers a portion of an existing employee's wages as he or she receives training.

"We will pay half of the wages of already employed workers while they are going through training," WIB Director Tana Holder said. "We want to help employers stay in our region."

#### FOCUS ON BUSINESS

#### KCP&L's \$1.3 Billion Energy Plan Approved by Regulators

Kansas City Power & Light Co. has received approval from both the Missouri Public Service Commission and the Kansas Corporation Commission for its \$1.3 billion energy plan which includes a \$776 million coal-fired power plant to be built about 40 miles north of downtown Kansas City. The new plan will help the company meet increased demand for affordable energy and comply with tougher environmental regulations.

[Read more...](#)

#### Ralcorp Buys Medallion Foods

St. Louis-based Ralcorp Holdings Inc. has paid \$101.8 million to purchase Newport, Ark.-based Medallion Foods Inc. The

[Grant to Assist Highlandville Sewer Expansion](#)

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**MISSOURI**  
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which are expected to leverage \$410,510 in donations for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Kansas City. The non-profit agency will use the donations to support Project Learn, which aims to help more than 400 at-risk youth stay in school and earn credits toward their high school diplomas.

[Read more...](#)

### **Metropolitan School Gets State Tax Credits**

The Missouri Department of Economic Development approved \$102,250 in Youth Opportunities Program tax credits for Metropolitan School for Individual Instruction Inc. The tax credits can leverage at least \$204,500 in contributions to help fund the agency's programs that address the special learning needs of disabled youth. [Read](#)

[more...](#)

### **South Central WIB Ribbon-Cutting and Open House**

Several local and state officials, area business and education representatives, and various service providers joined board members and staff on July 14 as the South Central Workforce Investment Board (WIB) celebrated the opening of its new office at 1105 Independence Drive in West Plains.

The WIB is a non-profit organization that administers federal and state funding in the 12-county area of Butler, Carter, Douglas, Howell, Oregon, Ozark, Reynolds, Ripley, Shannon, Texas, Wayne and Wright. The board oversees employment and training activities in the region.

acquisition makes Medallion a wholly-owned subsidiary of Ralcorp and it will operate as part of the Ralston Foods cereal and snack business. Medallion produces tortilla chips, corn chips and other corn-based snacks. [Read more...](#)

### **Cerner Wins \$51 Million Military Agreement**

Cerner Corp. recently announced that it has signed a 10-year agreement with the U.S. Department of Defense to use Cerner Millennium® PathNet® laboratory information system in the military health system's more than 100 hospitals and clinics around the world. A defense official valued the deal at \$51 million and Cerner spokeswoman Tracy Richardson called it "the largest lab contract we've done in our 25-year history." [Read more...](#)

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## **GLOBAL NEWS**

### **Georgia Incentive Programs Stimulate Growth**



Gov. Sonny Perdue has signed into law several state programs designed to help small or existing businesses in Georgia. The Mentor Protégé Program, the Entertainment Industry Investment Act, the Strategic Industries Tax Credit and the Entrepreneur and Small Business Growth Initiative are among Georgia's new incentives to foster growth in the state. [Read more...](#)

### **Kia Looking at U.S. Auto Plant**



According to media reports, Kia officials are considering several megasites in Mississippi and Kentucky for a major U.S. auto manufacturing plant. The parent company of Irvine, Calif.-based Kia Motors American is Kia Motors Corp. of Seoul, South Korea, which produces 1.15 million vehicles a year. [Read more...](#)

### **U.S. - China Consider Textile Deal**



The federal government announced this month that it will consult with the U.S. textile industry and members of Congress about a textiles trade agreement with China. In June, China and the European Union agreed to a broad agreement on textiles designed to limit Chinese imports to protect European companies that were facing heavy pressures from Chinese plants. [Read more...](#)





# FOCUS

## Missouri

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August 26, 2005

### HEADLINE NEWS

#### University of Missouri Names Vice President for Research and Economic Development



University of Missouri President Elson S. Floyd has appointed John C. Gardner to serve as vice president for research and economic development. In his new role, beginning Oct. 1, 2005, Gardner will coordinate the University of Missouri's state-wide activities in the critical area of research and economic development.

"I am convinced that the University of Missouri and the state of Missouri will be best served by having a single officer charged with the responsibility of ensuring that our economic development initiatives are carefully coordinated with local,

state and federal agencies to achieve maximum results for the people of our state," President Floyd said. [MU Press release...](#)

Gov. Matt Blunt praised the university's bold decision to create the position. "I have pledged to make our universities major economic engines in creating jobs and improving Missourians' quality of life and today's announcement by the University of Missouri is an unprecedented step toward that goal," Blunt said. "I would especially like to thank President Elson Floyd for being our partner in what is one of the most progressive and aggressive visions for job creation and economic growth this state has ever seen." [Read more...](#)

#### Department, University Sign Agreement on Missouri Film Office



The Missouri Department of Economic Development and the University of Missouri-Columbia have reached an agreement to transfer the Missouri Film Office to the university as a part of recent efforts to reduce state spending while maintaining

the integrity of the state's efforts to attract filmmakers and help keep film production a viable part of the state's economy.

The Missouri Film Commission, which is satisfied with the agreement, will remain under the administration of the department, but will continue to work closely with the Film Office to promote the film industry in Missouri. DED will also continue to administer the Film Production Tax Credit. The film office will have two staff members and be located in McReynolds Hall at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

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#### UPCOMING EVENTS

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**September 23, 2005**

[Growing Global 2005](#)

**September 23-24, 2005**

[Midwest Forest Industry Show](#)

**September 25-28, 2005**

[2005 IEDC Annual Conference: "The Global Economy is Here...Now What?"](#)

**October 12-14, 2005**

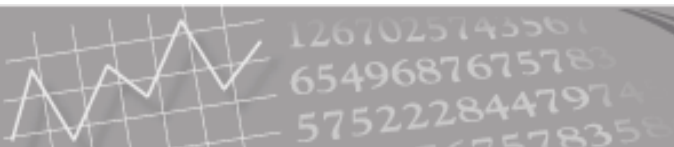
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### Missouri Exports on Track to Set New Record



Exports by Missouri companies totaled \$5.1 billion through the end of June 2005, compared to \$4.6 billion after the second quarter of 2004, putting the state on track to top 2004's record-setting global sales of nearly \$9 billion. Missouri's exports through the second quarter of 2005 were up by nearly eleven (10.96) percent compared to the same period in 2004, according to World Institute for Strategic Economic Research (WISER). [Read more...](#)

### Number of Asian-Owned Firms Increases by 32 Percent

There were 6,386 Asian-owned firms in Missouri in 2002, up from 4,834 in 1997, according to recently released data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2002 Survey of Business Owners. This was a 32.1 percent increase in the number of Asian-owned firms in the state. These firms accounted for nearly \$2 billion in sales and receipts in 2002. [Read more...](#)



#### FOCUS ON COMMUNITY

### Two St. Louis Charities Receive YOP Tax Credits

DED approved Youth Opportunity Program tax credits for two St. Louis charities this week. Catholic Family Services was approved for \$124,292 in YOP tax credits that may leverage up to \$248,584 in donations for its after school club and summer academy. The Edgewood Children's Center was approved for \$250,000 in YOP tax credits that can leverage up to \$500,000 to help fund individual, group and family therapy for youth with emotional, behavioral and communication disorders. [Read more...](#)

#### FOCUS ON WORKFORCE

### State Releases More Job Training Funds

The Division of Workforce Development released over \$350,000 in a third round of fiscal year 2006 training grants this week through the Missouri Customized Training Program. Funds will be used to facilitate classroom training for more than 1,183 new or existing employees at 19 Missouri companies. Companies will use the funds to pay for training programs customized to their particular industry and local needs.

Since July, approximately \$6.3 million in state training assistance has

#### FOCUS ON BUSINESS

### Route 36 Four-Lane Added to MoDOT's Five-year Plan

The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission has officially added the Route 36 four-lane project to the state's five-year program. "We look forward to working with area residents to build a facility that will improve safety and help spur economic development," said MoDOT Northeast District Engineer Kirk Jaranas. [Read more...](#)

### Midwest Consumer Prices Rise in July

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported last week that consumer prices

## Create Jobs, Boost Economy

### Milken Institute Study Shows Missouri a Bargain for Business

### Blunt Announces Missouri Businesses Continue Adding to Payrolls in July

## QUICK LINKS

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[Missouri Arts Council](#)

[Missouri Economic Development Council \(MEDC\)](#)

[Missouri General Assembly](#)

[Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)

### Local Tax Increment Financing

If a blighted or otherwise economically marginal area in your community could be redeveloped, would it make sense to devise a plan using a portion of the new tax revenues to help pay for the redevelopment project? Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is the mechanism by which dozens of Missouri municipalities are creating new economic life, new jobs, and new revenues, as well as improving appearances and physical conditions. [Read more...](#)

### Local Project Annual Report Requirements

Municipalities with a local Tax Increment Financing program, Community Improvement District, or a Chapter 100 Industrial Development Bond/Property Tax Abatement project are required to file annual reports with the Department of Economic Development. [Read more...](#)

been approved to train more than 17,000 new or existing employees at 163 Missouri companies. [Read more...](#)

### SMSU Launches Career Planning Initiative

Southeast Missouri State University is launching an initiative in the fall 2005 semester designed to help students prepare to enter the job market from the day they begin classes.

Beginning this fall, all new SMSU students will participate in a "Transitions Initiative," designed to help students make informed choices about academic planning and help them more easily connect academics to post-graduation plans. The initiative offers a personal, professional and practical approach to career planning. SMSU is collaborating with the Division of Workforce Development on the project. [Read more...](#)

in the Midwest, fueled by rising gasoline and oil prices, rose to 188.4 in July, up 0.3 percent from June and 2.8 percent from July 2004. That means typical goods and services that cost \$100 in the early 1980s will now cost a Midwest consumer nearly double at \$188.40. [Read more...](#)

### Missouri Universities Among Nation's Best

Several Missouri colleges and universities were ranked among *U.S. News & World Report's* list of [America's Best Colleges for 2006](#). The magazine lists rankings that include best values, departments, class sizes, financial resources and faculty resources. Washington University ranked No. 11 among the best national universities for undergraduate programs; Saint Louis University ranked No. 78; the University of Missouri-Columbia ranked No. 85; and the University of Missouri-Rolla ranked No. 109. [Read more...](#)

**Questions or Comments?  
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## GLOBAL NEWS

### Small Business Optimism Rises in July



The National Federation of Independent Business reported this month that the optimism of U.S. small businesses grew slightly in July as the potential for sales and profits brightened. "This increase in optimism is slight, but it's a confirmation of solid economic growth," said NFIB Chief Economist William Dunkelberg. [Read more...](#)

### Highway Bill Sends Billions to Bike Trails

The national transportation bill signed this month by President Bush spends most of its funding on road building, but it also includes an estimated \$3 billion to expand cycling and walking trails. Columbia, Mo. planners envision an extensive trails network that could be key to growth. "This could really put us on the map as one of America's healthiest communities," said Chip Cooper, chairman of The PedNet Coalition, a group of locals that promotes non-motorized transportation. [Read more...](#)



### U.S. Trade Deficit Balloons



A record foreign oil bill helped push the U.S. trade deficit up sharply in June. The trade gap in goods and services between the U.S. and other countries swelled by 6.1 percent to \$58.8 billion, according to the Commerce Department this month. A steep rise in imports, which hit a record \$165.7 billion, drove nearly all of the increase, while exports stayed nearly flat. The trade imbalance with China reached an all-time high. [Read more...](#)